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EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION IN THE SMALL SCHOOL.

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HENSLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, CONSISTING OF 72 STUDENTS AND 3 TEACHERS, HAS INCORPORATED 12 EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION PROGRAMS AS A REGULAR PART OF THE CURRICULUM IN THE FIRST 6 GRADES. GRADES 1 AND 2 VIEWED PROGRAMS IN SCIENCE, SPEECH, ART, MUSIC, AND STORY TIME. GRADES 3 AND 4 VIEWED SERIES IN MUSIC, SCIENCE, ART, AND SPEECH, WHILE GRADES 5 AND 6 WERE GIVEN PRESENTATIONS IN ARKANSAS HISTORY, ART, MUSIC, SCIENCE, AND PLACES IN THE NEWS. TEN TEACHING SPECIALISTS GAVE PRESENTATIONS VIA TELEVISION. CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT THROUGH THE USE OF TELEVISION PROVED ENTIRELY PRACTICAL, WITH THE STUDENT RECEIVING A STIMULATING CHANGE OF PACE AND MUCH LEARNING BEING TRANSFORMED INTO PLEASURABLE ACTIVITIES. TEACHERS CHARACTERIZED THE LEARNING AS AVERAGE AND ALSO NOTED A MARKED DECREASE IN DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS WHICH THEY ATTRIBUTED TO INCREASED MOTIVATION ON THE PART OF THE STUDENT DURING THE TELECASTS. EVALUATION SHEETS WERE PROVIDED FOR TEACHERS' REACTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT. THIS ARTICLE APPEARS IN THE "JOURNAL OF ARKANSAS EDUCATION," VOLUME 40, NUMBER 8, MAY, 1968. (DA)

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Lowell E. Ledford

EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION IN THE SMALL SCHOOL

Advocates of Educational Television note the special enrichment which it provides for schools whose size and location deprive them of services available to larger, urban schools. Hensley Elementary, located 15 miles south of Little Rock in the Pulaski County Special School District, provides an interesting test of the influence of Educational Television on such a school. It has six grades, seventy-two pupils, and three teachers. Of the twelve elementary instructional series offered over Channel 2, eleven have been used systematically as a part of the school's curriculum. The experiences of this small school provide an insight into what televised instruction can do, and suggest what is necessary to achieve an effective use of this teaching aid.

PROVISION OF FACILITIES

Before the school owned a set, the teachers provided their own receivers to bring into their classrooms the instructional series which were being televised toward Arkansas classrooms from the nearby transmitter at Redfield. The principal, Mrs. R. B. McMurray, recognized the possibilities which ETV had for her school and spoke to two groups which could help secure a television set: the administration of the school district, and the PTA. NDEA funds were made available by the former, and the latter raised the funds necessary to match the federal aid, and a single set was placed in a viewing room to serve the Hensley pupils.

VIEWING SCHEDULE

The ability of the teachers to devise and follow a viewing schedule was a positive ingredient for maximum viewing satisfaction. KETS repeats each series at least twice, and the teachers discovered that scheduling not only enabled the classes to view all the materials designed for their

grades, but also permitted viewing to take place with a minimum of movement to and from the viewing room.

The classroom teachers found that they had to schedule their time if they were to have the boys and girls ready for the contribution of the television teaching partner. The studio teacher must be conscious of the time and pace her presentation to fall within the rigid requirements of the broadcasting schedule. Her classroom counterpart learns to be as punctual in the team teaching operation which they develop together.

TEACHING AIDS

Studio teachers communicate with their classroom colleagues by means of teachers'guides. These manuals tell when a specific subject will be developed, and outline the televised presentation. Difficult vocabulary is listed for advanced study. Suggestions are made to promote readiness, and followup activities designed to reinforce learnings are recommended. These aids enable the classroom teacher to make the telelesson part of her own lesson, a resource selected to assist her in the teaching process.

CONTRIBUTION OF ETV TO SCHOOL

What actually did Educational Television make available to the Hensley School? Grades one and two used it for seven per cent of their instructional program, viewing science, speech, art, music and storytime. Grades three through six used it for thirteen per cent of their instruction. Music, science, art and speech were called upon by grades three and four. The upper two grades utilized Arkansas History, art, music, science and Places in the News.

Ten teaching specialists visited the school via Channel 2. The elementary teacher frequently does not have the time or the ability to develop skills in areas such as art or music. She welcomes the assistance of someone whose specific responsibility and training has been in these fields. These teaching specialists have time and resources to develop presentations and provide experiences which the classroom teacher is not prepared to duplicate. Unusual experiments, visits with outstanding people, and field trips far beyond the confines of the classroom are made possible through programs on science, history and current events.

The total Educational Television offerings involved in the teaching program at Hensley added 20 hours and 20 minutes to the curriculum. Informed sources estimate that the television teacher spends an hour in preparation for every minute that he is on camera. Therefore, the combined effort which went into the weekly schedule is equal to three full weeks of work done by each of the ten members of the teaching team.

HOW MUCH ETV IN THE CLASSROOM?

Can a school watch too much television in the classroom? Hensley used all that could be used, with the exception of the Spanish language course. Grades one and two viewed ETV an average of 26 minutes a day, and the upper four grades used it 48 minutes. The three classrooms averaged watching two ETV series daily, and on no day did the time spent in televised instruction approach that which the classroom teacher had available for unassisted instruction. A thoughtful use of ETV enables the boys and girls to receive an exciting change of pace, and transforms much of learning into a pleasurable experience. There are not sufficient series available to provide "too much" viewing, although an incorrect use of any of the audio visual aids at the teacher's disposal might be considered excessive.

TEACHERS' OPINIONS

The classroom teachers provided valuable feedback to their studio partners by means of evaluation sheets. They made suggestions and reported pupil reaction to the use of the series. When asked about student attention and attitude, the three reporting teachers selected "good" and "enthusiastic" as the words best describing pupil response during the telecast. The teachers regarded learning of televised materials as "average," and all agreed that they had fewer discipline problems during the telecast because of the increased motivation of the students to learn. Mrs. Janice W. Byram commented on her first grade art series: "It has stimulated and motivated our art activities as the children became aware of so many materials that could be used in our art work."

Enrichment of the school curriculum by means of Education Television has not been achieved without effort. The use of a single set for an entire school, the presence of two grades in a single classroom, the need

to move children to and from a viewing room rapidly to facilitate the use of the set by one group immediately following its use by another, the need to share teacher's guides with another teacher, all posed problems which demanded a solution. The Hensley faculty has met these challenges with ingenuity, resourcefulness, flexibility and determination. Where these qualities are present, pupils are insured of having the best instruction available. Where these qualities are combined with the resources which Educational Television offers, our schools, small and great, will be assured of having instruction which is far richer than either classroom or studio teacher would be able to develop alone.

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